(vi) re: death of a forest guard, Asodu Beat, Coondapur Range

SMT. WINNIFRED F.FERNANDES(Coondapur).-I call the attention of the Chief Minister to the death of Sri K. Venkatappa Gowda, Forest Guard, Asodu Beat, Coondapur Range on 2nd June 1977.

STATEMENT

Sri K H. RANGANATH (Minister for Co-operation and Parliamentary Affai s).—Madam Speaker on behalf of the Chief Minister I wish to state as follows.

On 3rd June 1977 around 9 A. M. Seetharama Aitala, aged about 61 years, Patel of Koteswara village. appeared in the Coondapur Police Station and presented a written repo t. The report indicated that an unidentified dead body was found in a paddy field in Markod locality of Koteswara village The body was found lying in the paddy field by Thimma Poojary a labourer who was proceeding for work at about 7 A. M. on 3-6-1977. Thimma poojary after noticing the dead body went and informed K. S Mahabala Achary to whom the paddy field belonged. Thereafter Thimma Poojary and Mahabala Achary together went to the house of the village patel K. Seetharma Aital (Complainant) and informed him about what they had noticed. They did not report anything suspicious. Seetharama Aithal thereafter proceeded to Coondapur police Station and reported the matter. The H. C. 388 Raghave who was present in the Police Station at the time registered a case in Coondapur Police Station UDR No. 18/77 u/s 174 Cr. P. O.

Investigation revealed that the body was that of Venkatappa Gowda, aged about 30 years Forest Guard residing at Koteswara. The deceased Forest Guard had b en residing at K teswara along with his wife Devaki aged about 26 years. on minor child Further more a small amount of "vo it" was also found l ing nearby. The mouth was noticed to be foaming Footprints of a single individual which matched with the chappals of the forest gua d were noticed on the sandy and wet soil. No marks of violence were notic d either on the body or on the ground immediately adjacent to the dead body. Inquest proceedings were conducted and the body was subjected for Post Mortem examination at the Government Hospital, Coondapur. The viscera was sent on 14-6-1977 to the Forens c Scisnce Laboratory, Bangalore for exam ination for poison in the contents.

Subsequently on 14-6-1977 around 11-30 P. M. Sri R. L. Dias, Forestor, Bailoor, appeared in the Coondapur Police Station, and made an oral complaint to the effect that he suspected foul play in

the death of the Forest Guard, Venkatappa Gowda. He (R. L. Dias) cited the instance of the deceased having checked a case of illegal transportation of Fire wood (in Tempo No MYG 7567) by (1) Bhaskara alias Basava Shetty, r/o Hombady village. (2) Gopalakrishna Achary r/o Koteswara and (3) Abdul Saheb r/o Koterwara, Sri R. L. Dias further reported that Hosadu Sanjeeva Hegde had threatened the Guard Venkatappa Gowda. with dire consequences.

The statement of Sri R.L.Dias was recorded by the PSI Coondapur who registered a case in Coondapur Police Station Cr. No. 59/77 u/s 302 I. P. C.

The Statement of witnesses recorded show that the deceased had stopped a Tempo MYG 7567 wich was carying firewood without permit on 25-5-1977. The inmates of the tempo 1. Abdul sab, 2. Gopalakrishna Achary, and 3. Bhaskara Shetty were told to unload the fire wood at Coondapur but they unloaded it at Koteswara. The firewood was seized by the forest authorities. The deceased had mad a report of this to the Range Forest officer. In this connection, according to Sri R. L. Dias, the deceased had been threatened by Hosadu Sanjeeva Hegde.

Further investigation is being made.

Smt. WINNIFRED F.FERNANDES.—Has it come to the notice of the Government that the State Forest Guard Venkatappa Gowda had seized the smuggled timber along with the accused and the vehicle, just four days before his death, that he had received some threatening letters and oral threatenings from the accused persons, that he has filed a written complaint with the forest authorities and also police stating that his life was in danger and he required protection? This was done on the 1st and on the 2nd death has occurred. According to the statement no action is taken against the accused person against whom he had complained. The Forest Guards had unitedly offered satyagraha because no action was taken by the Forest Department and there was hunger strike for one day. In the statement it is said that viscera was sent on 14-6-1977. The death occurred on the 2nd, post mortem was conducted much later and after 11 days viscers was sent to the forensic laboratory. What can they do with the decomposed viscera ? I think only for namesake they have done it. What is the action taken by the police people against the accused persons ? They have simply registered the case and have taken no further action. The accused have been left scotfree. Will the Govern ment insittute a thorough investigation and book the accused ? I have received many representations. There it is stated there is foul play, how he was taken out in the midnight and in the early morning

the body was in the field. It is a cold blooded murder. If there is no protection, what is the use. Will the Government assure that in future all protection will be given to these officials and a thorough investigation is done by the C. O. D. ?

SRI K. H. RANGANATH.—The C. O. D. is already seized of the matter and is investigating the whole thing. Of course no arrests are made because the matter is under investigation. The report on the viscera sent to the Forensic Science Laboratory is yet to be received. According to the information supplied, the viscera was preserved and sent, and it is not decomposed. The Government is yet to receive the examination report. From the Statement made, we see that the PSI, Coondapur has registered case in the Coondapur Police Station under section 302 of I P. C. It is not as if the Government is keeping quiet. The whole matter has been referred to the C. O D., which is investigating the matter. It is reported that the tempo belongs to one Gopalakrishna Achary. It is not as if the Government has not taken any action. As regards viscera it is stated that it is not decomposed.

SRI KAGODU THIMMAPPA.—Why there is a delay of nearly on month for making a statement on the floor of the House ? Why the culprit was not arrested ?

Smt. WINNIFRED F FERNANDES. —I want to know why the viscera was sent after 11 days for examination ? Who is responsible for this ?

SRI K. H RANGANATH.—The C. O. D. will investigate tho whole matter in detail as the same has been referred to it. The viscera was sent on 14-6-1977 for examination and the Forensic Science Laboratory will take some time to examine it.

SRI KAGODU THIMMAPPA.—Why there was a delay of 11 days for sending the viscera for examination ?

SRI K. H. RANGANATH.—The Government will look into it. The Government's intention is not to hush up things.

SRI NAZEER AHMED SIDDIQUI —If the viscera is kept in alcohol it will not be decomposed. It might have been kept in alcohol. So, the fear that it will be decomposed may not be correct. But the possibility of mischief is there.

Smt. WINNIFRED F. FERNANDES.—The contention of the hon'ble member is far from truth. He is not a medical expert. Any human part will get decomposed after 3 days of the death. The deceased has made a report to the Range Forest Officer. The deceased had been threatened by Sri Hosadu Sanjeeva Hegde. What action the Police

have taken to protect the deceased Venkappa Gowda ? If protection had been given, this cold-blooded murder would not have occurred. I want to know the action taken regarding the complaint ?

SRI K. H. RANGANATH.—That is a matter which the Government will have to take note of, and probably it will be looked into. There is some point in what the hon'ble member says. According to the statement the dead body was noticed on the 3rd, but according to the hon'ble member's information the death had occurred on the 2nd. Information about the previous complaint to the Police is not available. Government would take note of these things, and if there are lapses on the part of any official, they will be viewed very seriously.

SRI H. D. DEVE GOWDA.—Almost all the murder cases in South Kanara have been referred to the C. O. D., which means that the regular Police is incompetent of such investigation or that they are conniving with some other force to have proper investigation so far as murder cases are concerned. It starts from the case of Samita. The Police have failed to conduct investigation. What exactly is the mind of the people about such officers I do not know. Whether the Government is prepared to pull up these officers and see that proper persons are put in South Kanara ?

SRI K. H. RANGANATH.—People who involve themselves in these murder cases may be quite efficient. Can we expect any murderer to allow himself to be caught ? They do it in such a way that they want to escape. There are experts in South Kanara.

SRI H. D. DEVE GOWDA.—May be in one case !

SRI K. H. RANGANATH.—That does not make any reflection on the efficiency or inefficiency of the officers.

ಶ್ರೀ ಎಚ್. ಡಿ. ದೇವೇಗೌಡ.—ಸೌತ್ ಕೆನರಾದಲ್ಲಿ ನಡೆದಿರತಕ್ಕಂಥ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಮರ್ಡರ್ ಕೇಸುಗಳನ್ನು ನಾವು ನೋಡಿದರೆ, ಆ ಮೊಕದ್ದಮೆಗಳನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ರೆಗ್ಯುಲರ್ ಪೋಲೀಸ್‌ನವರ ಬೈಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇನ್‌ವೆಸ್ಟಿಗೇಷನ್ ಮಾಡುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಆಗದೇ ಸಿ. ಒ. ಡಿ. ಗೆ ಕಳುಹಿಸಿ ಕೊಡಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದರಿಂದ ಅಲ್ಲಿಯ ಪೊಲೀಸರಲ್ಲಿ ದಕ್ಷತೆ ಇಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ಅರ್ಥವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ, ದಕ್ಷತೆ ಇದ್ದರೂ ಕೂಡ ಅವರು ಸರಿಯಾದ ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರ್ಯ ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇನ್‌ವೆಸ್ಟಿಗೇಟ್ ಮಾಡುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಬಿಡುತ್ತಿಲ್ಲ ಎನ್ನುವ ಅಭಿಪ್ರಾಯಂಕ್ಕೆ ಬರಬೇಕಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಆದುದರಿಂದ ತಾವು ದಯಾಮಾಡಿ ಅದರ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟವಾಗಿ ಹೇಳಬೇಕು.

ಶ್ರೀ ಕೆ. ಎಚ್. ರಂಗನಾಥ್.—ಮಾನ್ಯ ಸದಸ್ಯರಿಗೇ ಗೊತ್ತಿರುವಂತೆ ಮಲೆನಾಡಿನ ಪ್ರದೇಶದಲ್ಲಿ ದೂರದೂರದಲ್ಲಿ ಮನೆಗಳು ಇರುತ್ತವೆ. ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಇನ್‌ವೆಸ್ಟಿಗೇಷನ್ ಮಾಡಿದಾಗ ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಫುಟ್ ಪ್ರಿಂಟ್ ಮಾತ್ರ ಇತ್ತು ಬೇರೆ ಏನೂ ಇರಲಿಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ತಿಳಿದು ಬಂದಿದೆ. ಮತ್ತೆ ಒಂದು ಚಪ್ಪಲಿ ಇತ್ತು ಎಂದು ಪ್ರೈಮಾ ಫೇಶಿ ಯಾಗಿ ಕಂಡಿರತಕ್ಕಂಥದ್ದು.

ಶ್ರೀ ಕೋಣಂದೂರು ಲಿಂಗಪ್ಪ.—ಒಂದನೇ ತಾರೀಖೆ ವೆಂಕಟಪ್ಪ ದೂರು ಕೊಟ್ಟಿಲ್ಲವೇ ?

ಶ್ರೀ ಕೆ. ಎಚ್. ರಂಗನಾಥ್.—ನೀವು ನೋಡಿಲ್ಲ, ನಾನು ನೋಡಿಲ್ಲ, ನೀವು ಏನೂ ಗೊತ್ತಿಲ್ಲದೆ ಈ ವಿಷಯದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಮಾತನಾಡುತ್ತಿದಿರಿ. ಮಾನ್ಯ ವಿರೋಧ ಪಕ್ಷದ ನಾಯಕರು ಏನು ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾರೆ. ?

ಮಾನ್ಯ ವಿರೋಧ ಪಕ್ಷದ ನಾಯಕರು, ಪೋಲೀಸ್ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು ಅಸಮರ್ಥರಾಗಿ ಕೆಲಸ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿರಬಹುದು, ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಎಲ್ಲ ಕೇಸುಗಳನ್ನು ಸಿ. ಓ. ಡಿ. ಗೆ ಕಳುಹಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆಂದು ಹೇಳಿದರು. ಆದರೆ ಅಲ್ಲ ಬಹಳ ಬುದ್ಧಿವಂತಿಕೆಯಿಂದ ಕೆಲಸ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿರಬಹುದು ಅಥವಾ ಇನ್ನು ಏನು ಕಾರಣ ಇದೆ ಹೇಗೆ ಹೇಗೆ ಇವೆಯೋ ಗೊತ್ತಿಲ್ಲ.

1-00 P. M.

ಶ್ರೀ ಕೋಣಂದೂರು ಲಿಂಗಪ್ಪ.—ಅವರಿಗೆ ಬುದ್ಧಿವಂತಿಕೆ ಇದೆ ; ನಿಮ್ಮ ಪೋಲೀಸರು ದಡ್ಡರಾಗಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

SRI K. H. RANGANATH —If the Government had not taken these things seriously, they would not have referred the case to the COD. Further, it is not as if all the cases are referred to the COD. Only complicated cases referred to the COD. In the present case, we find only the footprints of the deceased ; we do not find any marks of other persons In such cases, it becomes difficult for the ordinary police suspect. If there was a previous intimation according to the hon'ble member, the government would take note of it. On 14-6-1977 when the Forest official had gone and reported. it only then the Sub Inpector registered the cases under 302 of IPC. The matter has been referred to the COD as the matter was very serious. What the hon'ble leader of the Opposition says is that all the murder cases have been referred to COD. It is not correct. Only complicated cases are referred to the COD. That does not mean that the whole Police force is ineffieient or is not in a position to investigate.

Papers Laid on the Table

THE SECRETARY.—I beg to lay on the table of the House the third list of the unstarred questions and answers of the 7th session and the first list of unstarted questions and answers of the Eleventh session.

MADAM SPEAKER.—The list is laid.

Un-starred Questions and Answers

ELEVENTH SESSION

Afforestation in Bukkapatna Hobli

3 SRI T. TARE GOWDA (Kallambella).—Will the Minister for Food and Forests be pleased to state:—

(*a*) the extent of acres of land taken up for afforestation in Bukkapatna Hobli, Sira Taluk ;